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Moscow's Big Ears in Glen Cove

To the Editor:

Karen Polk's reminiscences of childhood fantasies of espionage going on behind the walls of the Soviet estate in Glen Cove ["What Lurked Behind the Glen Cove Fence," Op-Ed Aug. 7] ends with some adult questions about what is going on there.

Unless I am hugely mistaken, spying is going on. More precisely, eavesdropping through the interception of telephone conversations transmitted by microwave.

We have this from Arkady Shevchenko, formerly Under Secretary General of the United Nations and the most senior Soviet representative to that organization. Last spring on Canadian television (as reported by the A.P.) he stated: "All the top floors of the [Glen Cove] building are full of sophisticated equipment ... to intercept all conversations of anything which is going on. ... At least 15 or 17 technicians were working ... to do this job."

In 1977, I raised this general subject — Soviet eavesdropping — within the councils of the Carter Administration. The response ought to be better known. Convinced there was a threat, the Federal Government decided to bury its own telephone lines and those of its defense contractors, leaving the rest of us relatively defenseless.

I therefore introduced legislation requiring the President, upon learning of such illegal activity by a foreign mission, to demand that it be discontinued and, failing that, declare the

diplomats involved *persona non grata* and expel them.

The Times, on July 25, 1977, supported the principles reflected in the bill, stating: "If a member of the Soviet Embassy were caught stealing and shipping economic data back home, our authorities would, we hope, see to it that he was shipped back home. The blunt fact is that a foreign government on American shores is prying on American citizens. And notwithstanding the niceties of diplomatic immunity and extraterritoriality and rigamarole, the response should be equally blunt."

Still there was no response from the executive branch. At a hearing on April 21, 1977, by the Senate's Select Committee on Intelligence, I asked the then general counsel to the Central Intelligence Agency whether he did not consider the Soviet intrusion into our telephone system a violation of citizens' Fourth Amendment rights. The counsel replied that the Fourth Amendment only protects citizens against violations of rights by their own government!

I have reintroduced the bill (now S.1860). If the current Administration would but nod, it would pass. In the meantime, it might let off lecturing the people of Glen Cove about their duties to respect the civil rights of Soviet diplomats.

DANIEL PATRICK MOYNIHAN
U.S. Senator from New York
Washington, Aug. 10, 1982